

been confident of Mr. Friery's financial management skills. In 29 years of service, Thomas has always been able to provide a capable solution to the most pressing problems. Under his guidance, Sacramento became the first city pension fund in the State to invest in gold and silver. Those funds delivered 120 percent returns on the investment over a 2-year period. Additionally, over the past 29 years, the city has issued 250 bond offerings, raising more than \$4 billion for the city. In the 18 years prior to Mr. Friery, the city had made only 10 bond issues worth a total of \$70 million.

Mr. Friery also played a key role in the successful transition of the former Sacramento Army Depot into a business and industrial center after the depot was closed. In 1996, Treasurer Friery along with Mayor Joe Serna, assembled a financing package that included a loan of \$17 million to Packard Bell Electronics for improvements to the former Army depot, which included \$9 million for moving and other expenses. In the end, the company moved to Sacramento and at its peak employed 5,000 employees. The plant has since closed, but the company repaid the loan back and over \$400 million in salaries were paid to local reserves. That deal spurred future development at the depot which has now grown to house over 60 companies and is far more diversified.

In another bold move, Mr. Friery was vital in ensuring that Sacramento still remains the home for the Sacramento Kings. In 1997, when the Kings were exploring alternative cities and venues, he crafted a loan that enabled the team to continue building upon its legacy. It was also Mr. Friery who helped develop the financing that was crucial in ensuring light rail was developed in the region. This significant upgrade to Sacramento's transit system has allowed for further city development and an increase in property values throughout the region.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to recognize the numerous contributions made by Sacramento City treasurer Thomas Friery during his 29 years on the job. His devotion and love to our city of Sacramento is held in the highest regards. On behalf of the people of Sacramento and the Fifth Congressional District of California, I ask all my colleagues to join me in thanking Mr. Friery for his public service as we wish him success in his future endeavors.

HONORING THE ANNIVERSARY OF TOMBALL, TEXAS

HON. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 6, 2007

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of the most extraordinary towns in our country, Tomball, Texas and join them in celebrating their 100 year anniversary. This community began in the early 1800's as a farming community and has grown to be a town encompassing economic growth and core American values which makes our nation a great place to live.

Tomball is known for many things; it began as an agricultural community and has continued to grow expeditiously from day one. Originally this town was known as Peck, but at the

turn of the century in 1907, the town was officially named Tomball in honor of Mr. Thomas Henry Ball; a Congressman, a lawyer, a proud father, and an honorable man.

Tomball saw their first boom in 1906 when the railroad came to town. The first freight train and the first passenger rail rolled through town in 1907. Today visitors can step back in time and enjoy the newly refurbished train depot, in the heart of downtown Tomball, as trains move through town as they did a century ago.

Tomball was also known as "Oil Town U.S.A." in the early 1930's when oil was discovered in a big Texas way with a "gusher." The city was quick to realize the extraordinary asset before them and negotiated a deal with Humble Oil and Gas allowing the company drilling rights within the city in exchange for free oil and gas to Tomball residents for the next 50 years.

Tomball has seen growth in all aspects of the community. Since the turn of the century, there has been the boom of the railroad, the great success of oil and gas, real estate growth, and road improvements all contributing to the strong economic base for this town. Tomball has always been a place with extraordinary schools, both public and private. The city possesses citizens with an eagerness to learn extending to higher education within the college system. Faith is important to this community and is the foundation that enables numerous churches to congregate within the area.

Tomball is an amazing town within Harris County, Texas. It is the residents continued dedication to this town which makes it one of the friendliest places to live not only in Texas but in the United States. Although Tomball has endured many changes over the last century one thing remains the same, the people. The people of this community have always been the most thoughtful and caring individuals a town could ever ask for. As we celebrate the first 100 years of Tomball it is with great joy I say thank you for being a wonderful and compassionate community. I wish this city all the best in the next 100 years, as I know only good things will come from such an amazing place. Happy Birthday Tomball and congratulations on reaching this remarkable milestone.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS

SPEECH OF

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 5, 2007

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, as the sponsor of H. Res. 744, I rise in strong support of this resolution and urge its passage. I want to thank Representative STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN who is an original cosponsor of this resolution and who is a strong advocate for our veterans. I also want to thank Chairman BOB FILNER, who cosponsored the resolution and Ranking Member STEVE BUYER for his commitment to all veterans.

Earlier this year I met with some Native American veterans in my State. They expressed many concerns to me and were worried that all Native American Veterans had not

been recognized for their service to their country.

On October 15, 2007, Congresswoman HERSETH SANDLIN and I introduced H. Res. 744, a resolution that recognizes the contributions of Native American veterans and calls upon the President of the United States to issue a proclamation urging the United States to observe a day in honor of Native American veterans.

Native Americans were participants in the War of 1812, the Civil War and the Spanish-American War. During World War I, 12,000 Native Americans served in the United States military and in World War II, more than 44,000 Native Americans served their country in both the European and Pacific fronts of the war. Native Americans also fought in the Korean conflict and the Vietnam war. In Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, Native Americans have made significant contributions.

Native American veterans should be recognized for their service in uniform. This resolution gives all Native American veterans the formal recognition they deserve for their sacrifices and contributions.

I have also introduced H.R. 4012, the Native American Language Assistance Act of 2007, a bill to assist VA hospitals and clinics that treat a large number of Native American patients. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation that will ensure that Native American veterans have access, delivery and follow-up of services at the VA.

The bill would require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a program to make competitive grants to any VA medical facility that treats a high number of Native American veterans. The grants, up to \$100,000 each, would provide interpreters or other language resources to improve access to, delivery of, and follow-up for medical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

I am concerned that Indian veterans are not receiving adequate assistance and support for their care at our VA hospitals. This bill will provide help to those hospitals that treat high numbers of Indians. By providing our VA hospitals with funding for language programs and outreach, we can better communicate to these veterans about what services and benefits are available to them and make sure they are getting the care and support they need.

Nationally, there are 195,871 Native American veterans. There are 11,929 Native American Veterans in New Mexico—3.1 percent of the entire American Indian veteran population.

I am grateful to all who serve their Nation and we as a Congress have a responsibility to ensure they receive the best possible care. In this war on terrorism, the greatest burdens have fallen on the shoulders of a relatively small number of Americans who have volunteered to take great risks on our behalf. Events over the last few years have made a new generation of Americans realize just how precious our freedoms really are. We owe our freedom fighters—past, present, and future—a debt of gratitude for their selflessness and sacrifice. I will continue to fight to ensure that our veterans get the benefits they were promised, the health care they deserve, and the recognition that our Nation owes them.

I support passage of this resolution.